

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY China

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Businessmen to Indochina

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1. Some wealthy Chinese and foreigners, including French and Soviet citizens, are making arrangements to move from Shanghai to Indochina. Reasons given for such moves are as follows: (1) Indochina is considered a safer place to live and commercial possibilities are more inviting, and (2) the French authorities in Indochina are now more liberal in granting entry visas.
2. For Soviet citizens in Shanghai, regulations for obtaining entry visas to Indochina have been simplified. The approval of the local French consulate and a special introduction from a prominent French citizen in Shanghai are the main prerequisites. Soviet citizens I.I. Druri and A. Chibunovsky expect to leave Shanghai for Indochina in the spring of 1948. Through the mediation of Charles Grosbois, pro-Soviet French Cultural Attache in Shanghai, visa applications of both men have been approved by the French Consulate in Shanghai.
3. I.I. Druri will enter Indochina as a representative for French and Soviet films. Although Druri, a former Russian emigre of French ancestry, was trained to be a railroad engineer, the Soviet authorities have never given him an assignment in line with his profession. He became a Soviet citizen in Harbin in 1924. His assignments included that of (1) Soviet liaison officer between French groups in Manchuria and North China, particularly those in Tientsin, and (2) master of ceremonies at Soviet-sponsored functions in Harbin when foreigners were invited. When in 1936 the USSR transferred the Chinese-Eastern Railway to the Japanese Manchukuo Government, any Russian emigre employee of the railroad who refused repatriation was declared disloyal and deprived of citizenship. Druri, however, was not affected by this order, as the Soviet authorities did not put his name on the list of repatriates.
4. When Druri arrived in Shanghai in 1936 he was immediately placed in a nominal but well-paid position in the Soviet Consulate and began the same sort of liaison work he had done in Harbin. At the same time, in spite of his semi-official position, he acted as the sole agent and distributor of French films. In this capacity he made excellent connections in Indochina, where he often went on business and sometimes remained for months at a time. Later Druri was connected with Centrosyus (Central Cooperative Union).
5. During World War II Druri remained in Shanghai without any official job but with

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a regular monthly salary from Exportkhleb. Sizov, then head of Exportkhleb in Shanghai, used Druri occasionally for liaison with French business circles. During 1946-47, although a nominal employee of Torgpredstvo, Druri did not have any real business assignments and was called in only occasionally as "an expert on technical matters". He has been consistently identified with movements of Soviet business interests, such as the transfer of Soviet businessmen to Hongkong and the trip of S. Stakhursky to Indochina, which he financed.

6. A. Chibunovsky [REDACTED] Director of the Russian Bank in Shanghai, will enter Indochina as a dealer in coal. He has provided himself with contracts from Shanghai coal dealers and claims at present to be negotiating with the Paul P. Yannoulatos Shipping Agency, 55 Yuen Ming Yuen Road, regarding shipping arrangements for exports from Indochina. He believes that if he obtains a sufficient number of contracts with Chinese and Indochinese firms, Yannoulatos will provide adequate shipping facilities by buying and chartering vessels in America.

7. Neither Chibunovsky nor Druri has at present sufficient capital to start a business in Indochina. It is probable that the Shanghai office of Torgpredstvo is backing them financially.

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8. I.I. Druri has been conferring with USSR-dispatched personnel of the Shanghai Torgpredstvo office. On 20 January 1948 A. Chibunovsky went to the Shanghai Torgpredstvo office to confer with A. Kochin, assistant director of the office.

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